1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
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sary to read the account of the gawel-waku reciprocal, keeping in mind that this waku is her gurrong when she is wife of the gawel. 602 606

Mokul and gurrong mielk are not taboo to each other. This relationship has no restrictions upon it.

Marelker ⟷ *Gurrong* (diramo and mielk) (mother's mother's brother's son ⟷ father's sister's daughter's children) 602

The same varieties of the marelker-gurrong relationship are found among the Murngin as the mokul-gurrong, since marelker is the brother of mokul; but the marelker-gurrong relationship, as well as that of marelker and gurrong diramo, is quite different. Avoidance and restraint are lacking between marelker and gurrong diramo; the two men are frequently together, particularly if ego has a son, because marelker is mari to the boy. Marelker is as fond of the child as its father and shows it as much attention. Gurrong makes presents to marelker whenever he gives anything to mokul, for as marelker is mokul's brother he has considerable control over her. The only taboo between the two men is that neither uses the other's personal names.

Marelker diramo and gurrong mielk are partly taboo to each other. They do not speak each other's names, and because of the moiety are sexually taboo. One of the most amusing stories in Murngin folk lore is an account of marelker seducing his female gurrong, the whole point of the story being that marelker is made to do the very things he is supposed to avoid in his daily behavior with gurrong. 835 538

Natchiwalker ⟷ *Dumungur* (diramo and mielk) (mother's mother's mother's brother's son ⟷ father's sister's daughter's daughter's child)

This relationship is built on the pattern of the nati-kaminyer reciprocity. Natchiwalker is important largely as a brother of momelker. His name is taboo to dumungur, and dumungur's is taboo to him.

Momelker ⟷ *Dumungur* (diramo and mielk) (mother's mother's mother's brother's daughter ⟷ father's sister's daughter's daughter's child)

Momelker is taboo to dumungur diramo just as fully as mokul is to gurrong diramo. She is the mother of mokul and she is also mokul to ego's gawel. Ego therefore uses the same behavior to her as does his gawel. There are no taboos between momelker and dumungur mielk. This relationship is unimportant.

There are the following varieties of momelker: (1) blood mother

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
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CHAPTER VIII

A SOCIOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION OF MAGIC

Section I. The Problem of Ritual and Magic Presented by the Northern and Southern Areas

Since the northeastern clans share a belief in magic but lack magical techniques and magicians, the people there either are forced to travel to the south and west for treatment by white magicians, such visits being comparatively rare, or resort to other means found within their own area.

In the south and west black and white magicians are found who have definite techniques for curing and for killing.

The social organizations of the two areas are identical; the totemic situation is the same, and in general there is little variation in the culture except for magical practices. With magical treatment absent in the north, the problem arises as to what to substitute for it, since there is the obvious necessity of attempting to cure an ailing man.

Throughout the north there is a general *belief* in black magic, but it is ascribed to sorcerers operating in the south. The relevant northern thinking on illness is not different from that in the southern area where the offending magician is also an outsider of the clan and the near kinship group. The difference is that there is no sorcerer within the northern groups to whom the people can appeal for punitive magic. It is analogous to knowing the effects of heavy artillery but not possessing it. The magical folklore of the north is sufficiently gruesome to cause the most fearsome apprehension in the minds of people who believe their illnesses caused by such practices.

The two more common accounts of black magical practices believed in throughout the northern Murngin clans and among all the surrounding tribes follow.

1. Two or three magicians follow a man when he is by himself, rush upon him, and throw a spear into him. The man falls down and the others rush upon him. He is in a kind of coma. The mouth cannot move but

7: Berndt E-5 (1946-1950) 1952
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Chapter Four

THE DJANGGAWUL SONGS

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THE songs of the *dua nara* include some of the most beautiful literary efforts of Aboriginal Australia. They are poems set to traditional tunes, outlining the activities of the Djanggawul. In essence, they represent the original songs sung by these Ancestral Beings in the Dreaming Times; but through the ages they must have undergone a certain amount of alteration, a process to which they are vulnerable on account of their length. This is not to suggest that their content has necessarily been distorted, but merely that, through the course of generations in a non-literate society, they have not come down to us with exactly the same form and content as when they were sung by the Djanggawul.

538 The songs of north-eastern Arnhem Land, of which some examples have been set out elsewhere,[1] have a unique place in Aboriginal Australia, for they are longer and expressive of greater detail than those found in other areas. In structure and approach they differ from those of, for instance, southern Arnhem Land,[2] or Central-Western Northern Territory.[3]

538 These songs are poetry in their own right, and express the 182 spirit of the culture to which they belong as, perhaps, no other

[1] See R. Berndt, 'A Wonguri-Mandjikai Song Cycle of the Moon Bone', *Oceania*, Vol. XIX, No. 1, pp. 16–50; 'Badu, Islands of the Spirits', *Oceania*, Vol. XIX, No. 2, pp. 93–103; C. Berndt, 'Expressions of Grief Among Aboriginal Women', *Oceania*, Vol. XX, No. 4, pp. 286–332, and 'A Drama of North-Eastern Arnhem Land'.
Also see R. Berndt, *Love Songs of Arnhem Land*, for publication.

[2] *Vide* R. Berndt, *Kunapipi*, Chapters VII, VIII, X, XI.

[3] C. Berndt, *Women's Changing Ceremonies in Northern Australia*, L'Homme, 1950.

7: Berndt E-5 (1946-1950) 1952
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medium can do. In this respect they are inseparable from that culture, expressing as they do something of the Aborigines' sense of the beautiful, their feeling of strength and sureness in the essential goodness and vividness of their own way of life. This is an important point, for as these poetic songs stand to-day they represent the achievement, not of individual men or women, but of the community as a whole. Moreover, this achievement does not belong to any one era, but is the culminative result of centuries of effort—how many, we shall probably never know.

The songs are an integral part of the Djanggawul myth and of its ritual, for these three elements are interdependent. The Djanggawul myth, as set out in Chapter 2, is rarely told by a story-teller; it is, rather, sung out, in the manner of the songs presented here and in following chapters. What is more, no *nara* ritual is performed without the accompaniment of these songs.

These songs are not merely traditional; they are also sacred, because each is essentially of divine 'composition'. They set out to describe in detail all the incidents that took place during the wanderings of the Djanggawul, from the time they left their spirit home at Bralgu until they reached the neighbourhood of Milingimbi.[1] There is a certain amount of repetition, beloved of the Aboriginal song man; there are 'inside' and 'singing' words, alternatives to those in everyday use, and a wealth of symbolic allusions. The language of the songs is not archaic or highly specialized, as found in some areas in reference to sacred singing, but is for the most part the ordinary language spoken by the people. This is interspersed with occasional sacred words, 'singing' words, or invocations used only in this context; but essentially the songs are constructed in such a way that all may understand them. They are sung according to a defined traditional rhythm, the words being abbreviated, lengthened or elaborated to meet the requirements of the tune, while the development of the theme proceeds graphically with the help of considerable detail.

These Djanggawul songs express the essence of ceremonial behaviour, and of the relevant mythology, and through them we understand the significance of the *dua nara* and of the Djanggawul cult. To appreciate them fully, it is necessary to understand thoroughly both the ritualistic background and the mythology, in conjunction with other facets of the cultural pattern of this area. While the song is in progress, participants and onlookers alike are reminded of the intent of the ritual—but not of that intent alone, for these sacred

[1] As mentioned elsewhere, this journey is extended in the Milingimbi version of the Djanggawul cycle.

7: Berndt E-5 (1946-1950) 1952
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The Djanggawul Songs

533 182 songs are possessed of a sacred power peculiar to the Djanggawul.[1] The songs, since they 'belong' to the divine Beings, give the ritual an atmosphere of reality, in the sense of veracity, and a deep consciousness of affiliation and continuity with these Beings themselves. Sacred songs, sung on the ceremonial ground by hereditary leaders, in conjunction with ritual and dancing, and in the presence of religious symbols or emblems, vividly reflect and re-inspire the religious emotions of all who hear them.

126 538 128 The songs presented here are translations, and have inevitably suffered in the process. To appreciate all the subtle turns of phrase, the abundant allusions and so on, one should read them in the original, interlinearly translated, in conjunction with copious notes.[2] It is only through understanding of the language that we can derive the fullest benefit from these songs.

Nevertheless, we have adhered strictly to the literal translation of all words in the songs, endeavouring to retain the beauty of the original. Difficulty has been experienced, however, in finding satisfactory English equivalents for certain words. The translation errs, perhaps, on the side of restraint, for many of the English words used (unlike those in the Aboriginal text) may appear prosaic and lacking in poetic value. The different words referring to sounds of various kinds, for instance, are not easy to transcribe: and 'noise' is a poor, although often necessary, substitute.

No attempt has been made to conform to the original rhythm and metre, since this would involve manipulating the translation at the expense of its actual content. The arrangement into lines conforms to the pauses made by the Aborigines themselves when singing or reciting.

128 Comments or notes are not attached to each song, as in the case of the originals, but any points that seem to need discussion have been referred to in the section immediately following each part of the cycle. For convenience, and to facilitate the gradual development of our analysis, we have set out ten parts to this epic, corresponding to various stages in the travels of the Djanggawul.

As the songs progress, from one stage to another, we may follow the symbolism and intent which have already been indicated in earlier chapters. The significance of each part will be treated briefly at its conclusion, so that at the end of the epic the whole may be viewed in proper perspective.

[1] In *Kunapipi* (*op. cit.*, Chapter VII) it was said that 'the songs are the echo of those first sung by the Ancestral Beings: the spirit of the echo goes on through timeless space, and when we sing, we take up the echo and make sound.' This applies also to the Djanggawul songs.

[2] These are to be published separately through the journal *Oceania* as a monograph, on account of the great number of phonetic texts. The serious reader or student is advised to read these in conjunction with the translations set out here.

7: Berndt E-5 (1946-1950) 1952
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Comments on Part One of the Songs

Song 25 suggests that the Djanggawul are close to the mainland: the flying foxes are crying from their trees, which are said to be *djinda ranggu* (lines 6, 7 and 8). In Song 26 the travellers discover that the *ranggu* and mat(s) they have carried in their canoe have become sodden with salt water and spray. Bralbral asks the Djanggawul what they intend to do with the wet *ranggu*, tied up in the basket (mat)—line 8, they decide to throw the basket away with the *ranggu* inside. On second thoughts, the Djanggawul Brother says, 'No! We will have a look inside first, before they sink down into the sea.' The Two Sisters, however, object. 'No, you are not going to open (or untie) it. You can just throw it into the sea, because it has all got wet.' Since the Sisters are the real custodians of the sacred *ranggu*, the decision rests with them; the Djanggawul Brother and his companion Bralbral can do nothing. They therefore throw the *ranggu* over the side of their canoe, so that they '. . . sink down, making a noise as the sea covers them' (line 13). Some *ranggu*, however, have been kept. It is not clear whether the basket (or mat) containing the *ranggu* is thrown overboard, or whether the *ranggu* are removed and then thrown out of the canoe. A native drawing (*vide* original text and notes) shows the *ranggu* being removed from the *ngainmara*. Not only are the *ranggu* wet, but their decorations, like the fibre of the mat, are stained with spray and foam. One part of the original text suggests that the mat is first undone (its 'mouth' opened), and then turned upside down so that the *ranggu* fall out one by one into the water; finally, the mat itself is 'put into the water'. The *ranggu* make a reef outside the entrance to Port Bradshaw, while the mat turns into a whale (*vide* Song 6). The text, however, indicates rather that the 'mouth' or aperture of the mat was not undone, and all the *ranggu* were just dumped overboard. As they are thrown into the sea, the Djanggawul call the sacred invocations (line 12); see Chapter 1.

In the last song (27) of this section, we are told that the Brother and Bralbral regret having thrown away the *ranggu* and mat without first looking at them. 'I am worrying (says the Djanggawul Brother) about the *ranggu*. (Why didn't we open the mat?)'—line 5. They attribute their carelessness to their being tired—'I am just tired! That was why *waridj*, we threw away the sacred *ranggu* and mat.'—line 6. They are very weary, for they have travelled such a long way; and at last they have reached Port Bradshaw. 'That is our country!' (line 9) they exclaim, as they beach their canoe, 'We have arrived, oh *Waridj*!' (line 10). The Djanggawul step on to the shore, and insert their *manwulan ranggu* into the ground; at its withdrawal water gushes forth, leaving a permanent spring.

In commenting on these songs, we have mentioned only the

7: Berndt E-5 (1946-1950) 1952
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Comments on Part One of the Songs

539 outstanding details. Many interesting features are revealed in the
538 phonetic texts, and these are discussed elsewhere. We can see, how-
533 ever, how well controlled is the theme, how ideas follow in sequence, and how behind all the various incidents a definite structure or pattern is evolved and retained. Certain points are constantly reiterated throughout most of this section. This is a common practice in most song cycles of north-eastern and north-central Arnhem Land, where it is apparently felt that repetition gives background and atmosphere to the separate songs. The paddling, the Morning Star, the roar of the sea with its spray and foam, appear again and again. There is a feeling of movement and action which lends veracity to the saga; the eternal movement of the sea, its constant roar, and ever undulating waves, are said to have been caused not only by the paddling of the Djanggawul, but by the marine creatures which they meet on their journey. Wherever possible too, the underlying pattern of the Djanggawul ideology is linked to various incidents and themes: the flocks of birds and nests, for instance; the rolling *rangga* in the mat, rattling with the movement of the canoe; the whale *ngainmara*; the *rangga* and feathered string, and the rays from the sun; the throwing overboard of the *rangga* and mat and so on; all intrude themselves to express the symbolic significance of the Djanggawul's journey.

[pp. 93 – 291 not processed]

8: Berndt E-5 (1946-1950) 1954
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commenced perhaps some hundreds of years ago, when these travellers of the sea expanded their field to include the North Australian coast. They came in search of trade, of trepang (bêche de mer), tortoise-shell, pearl-shell, sandalwood and timber.

But even before this, so these Aborigines tell in the songs that record and preserve their traditions, the "Baijini" people visited their shores. These Baijini, or pre-Macassans, also came from the western islands beyond the Arafura and Timor Seas; and the Aborigines still sing today of the ships in which these people arrived, and the women who came with them; the stone dwellings they built on the Australian mainland; the cloth that they wove and dyed; the clothes they wore, and the way in which they speared fish and cultivated small gardens. They are said to have been paler than the Macassans, a golden brown or copper colour like certain flying foxes. The Baijini era is looked upon, now, as belonging to the far-distant past – a part, almost, of the Ancestral Dreaming period, when the great Spirit Beings walked the earth. In some stories the Baijini are said to have been contemporaries of the most important among the Ancestral Beings, the Djanggawul Brother and Sisters.

The Aborigines distinguish this period from what they regard as historic times, when the Indonesians came sailing to the coast in their praus. They arrived with the north-west monsoons in October or November, staying for at least six months of the year and returning home again with the south-east winds. Occasionally some of them remained behind with their ships all through the dry winter, to be on hand when the fleets arrived at the beginning of the wet season.[1]

We cannot be certain of the approximate period when this Indonesian contact commenced, but tentative calculations place it in the early sixteenth century. Numerous camp sites, archaeological remains, old graves and tamarind trees testify to a prolonged association. Some of the large Macassan settlements have left concrete evidence behind them. In the north-eastern corner, for instance, quantities of pottery fragments have been found on an island at the mouth of Port Bradshaw and along the adjacent mainland.

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But it is in the realm of the great song cycles and the stories which survive that a colourful picture of Malayan and Macassan life on these shores is unfolded.

At various sites on the north-east and south-east coast of Arnhem Land, at Arnhem Bay, Melville Bay, Port Bradshaw, Trial Bay, Caledon Bay and Groote Eylandt, these Indonesians of different types (not all true Macassan or Malay traders) founded their settlements. They built their houses on stilts, roofed them with woven leaves and fibre of coconut palm and even furnished them in an elementary way. They kept fowls,[2] fastened by one leg to the posts of the huts. Nearby they erected large boilers, and racks for drying the trepang, and out in the bays their ships were lying at anchor or being repaired. Each main settlement was a hive of industry, with Macassans and Australian Aborigines employed as labourers for specified payments. There were bartering depôts. Local natives brought in pearls, tortoise-shell and other natural products that the Indonesians wanted, and were given in exchange East Indies currency, introduced foods such as rice and sweetmeats, or cloth, knives and tobacco. This trade was well established and its influences are still apparent today.[3]

The visitors not only brought goods from their own country. While they were settled on the mainland they manufactured pottery, knives, cloth and sails, and they kept written accounts of their transactions with the Aborigines and with their own employees. The effects of their sojourn are seen in some forms of the local material culture. They introduced the dug-out canoe, which has almost replaced the indigenous bark variety, and it was from them that the natives learned to use steel in making knives, spear blades and tomahawks.

But it seems to have been in their diversions and entertainments, or in their ceremonies, that the Indonesians exerted their greatest influence on Aboriginal life. Watching them, the Aborigines learnt to play cards,[4] and began to adapt their song rhythms to alien tunes and the sounds of foreign musical instruments. Their mortuary ceremonies came to be associated with the departure of the praus, and with Macassan burial rites.[5] The important secular ceremony of the carved *wuramu* figure, the

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more inclined to be blatant about sexual associations, while the other, perhaps equally promiscuous, is less willing to acknowledge this fact in public.

Even before the memorable meeting of Captain Mathew Flinders with Pobassoo, on 17 February 1803,[11] in the "Malay Road" between the English Company Islands and the mainland near Cape Wilberforce, Dutch and Portuguese voyagers had visited the north coast of Australia,[12] but their contact with the Aborigines seems to have been only transitory and unimportant. Before this, too, there is reason to believe that these coastal people had some association with native groups of the Torres Strait Islands and southern New Guinea. This subject is treated in one of the long song cycles of eastern Arnhem Land – although in later years, when the Missions introduced Badu Islanders (from the Torres Straits), these indigenous songs proved receptive in some degree to new ideas concerning that area.[13]

Mathew Flinders was followed by other explorers and surveyors,[14] until in the last quarter of the nineteenth century European traders became increasingly familiar with the Arnhem Land coast. About this time the relations between Macassans and the Aborigines began to deteriorate, and a number of massacres of these Indonesian visitors[15] were reported. Intercourse between Aborigines and Europeans was far from amicable. Mass shootings took place, native women were abducted, and some white men were speared. There was an attempt to settle part of the "Arafura" country, between Milingimbi and Elcho Island; in 1885 Florida cattle station was established near Mount Delight, between the Woolen and Blyth rivers.[16]

When the Macassan visits to the north coast came to an end there was an influx of Japanese pearlers and traders, and a few Europeans began to concentrate on trepanging. These people employed on their boats Aborigines from Darwin, Bathurst and Melville Islands and Goulburn Islands, as well as natives from the Torres Strait Islands, so that the coastal Arnhem Landers came in contact with a variety of "racial" types. The Japanese, for example, did not remain for long on friendly terms with the local natives; there were occasional spearings and massacres,

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
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* 7773 841 his body grows from infancy to prime of life, at full moon, and declines to old age and death, all in the space of four weeks. He drops his old skeleton into the sea and we know it as the nautilus shell. The lunar cycle is recommenced by Ngalindi's production of a new infant body for himself—the new moon.

[538] Anthropomorphic conceptions of mythical ancestors, the sun, the moon, and the stars, are so highly developed in aboriginal folk-lore, that apart from a few supernatural powers the characters might be ordinary Yulengor. I asked if all the stars were men and women, and if the sky were populated in the same way as the earth, and I was told that no one knows; it is thought that, though the heavenly bodies once had physical form, they have now become spiritual beings clothed in light, and there are many of them that have not yet been seen.

* 7773 825 'Guwak' is the general name given to the black pied magpie, ordinarily known as 'mudlark' or 'pee-wee'. They are said to roost among the stars. Nomads believe that they feed on the earth and fly into the sky after sunset. Originally the Guwak were three men made by the Junkgowa and sent out to prepare ceremonial grounds for unborn hordes in Blue Mud Bay and Arnhem Bay. Immediately they had completed their preparations they returned to the Junkgowa with a strange request: 'We have finished our work and now we wish to roam over the earth and fly into the sky.'

'Well,' said the Junkgowa, 'you can come with us as we go into the west.'

'No, we want to be free to fly about and please ourselves. We don't want to walk any more. Our work is finished and we want to fly and see other places.'

The Junkgowa suggested a change of work: 'If you want to see other places, you can go west and make new horde-territories for us.'